Amendments to the claims:

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.121 and the revised amendment practice effective July 30, 2003, please cancel claims 2, 3, 22 and 23, and amend claims 1, 5-7, 9, 12-14 and 21 as indicated herein. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.121(c), a complete listing of all the claims in the application, including their current status, is provided immediately below for the convenience of the Examiner.

COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS IN THE APPLICATION

1. (Currently amended) A ferrule for a fiber optic assembly, comprising:

a ferrule body having an outer periphery and defining a forward end, an opposed rearward end, and at least one passageway extending between the forward end and the rearward end, the forward end defining an end face between the passageway and the outer periphery; and

a fiber optic indicia formed on ~~a predetermined portion of a surface~~ the end face defined by the forward end of the ferrule body, wherein the fiber optic indicia comprises a predetermined pattern associated with data about the fiber optic assembly, wherein the data comprises at least one of an optical characteristic and a product characteristic.

2. (Canceled).

3. (Canceled).

4. (Original) The ferrule of claim 1, wherein the at least one passageway comprises at least one passageway having a respective opening at the forward end.

5. (Currently amended) The ferrule of claim 4, wherein the ~~predetermined portion~~ fiber optic indicia is located within at least about 150 microns from the opening of the at least one passageway at the forward end.

6. (Currently amended) The ferrule of claim 1, wherein the ferule body further comprises:

an optical fiber extending at least partially through the at least one passageway such that an end portion of the optical fiber is exposed at ~~an~~ the end face ~~of~~ defined by the forward end of the ferrule.

7. (Currently amended) The ferrule of claim 6, wherein the ~~predetermined portion~~ fiber optic indicia is located on the optical fiber exposed at the end face ~~of~~ defined by the forward end.

8. (Original) The ferrule of claim 1, wherein the ferrule is made from at least one of the following materials:

metal;

polymer;

plastic;

ceramic;

glass; and

crystal.

9. (Currently amended) A method of marking a ~~component~~ ferrule of a fiber optic assembly, comprising:

establishing a predetermined pattern of a fiber optic indicia, wherein the fiber optic indicia is associated with information about the fiber optic assembly;

providing the ~~component~~ ferrule for marking, the ferrule having an outer periphery and defining a rearward end, a forward end opposite the rearward end and a passageway extending between the rearward end and the forward end, the forward end defining an end face between the passageway and the outer periphery;

preparing ~~a predetermined portion of a surface of the component~~ the end face of the ferrule for marking; and

marking the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ the end face of the ferrule in accordance with the predetermined pattern of the fiber optic indicia.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the fiber optic indicia comprises at least one alphanumeric character.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the fiber optic indicia comprises at least one symbol.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, wherein marking the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ end face of the ferrule comprises laser etching the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ end face of the ferrule.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein marking the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ end face of the ferrule comprises applying color to the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ end face of the ferrule.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9, wherein marking the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ end face of the ferrule comprises differentiating planar colors of the fiber optic indicia and the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ end face of the ferrule.

15. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the fiber optic indicia comprises at least one of the following:

a film;

a substrate;

a light sensitive indicia; and

a magnetic substance.

16. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein the information comprises data about at least one optical characteristic of the fiber optic assembly.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the optical characteristic comprises at least one of the following:

ferrule end face geometry measurement data;

ferrule dimension data;

end face fiber protrusion; and

ferrule mode data.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the optical characteristic comprises performance data of the fiber optic assembly.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the performance data comprises at least one of the following:

attenuation data;

back reflection data; and

insertion loss data.

20. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the information comprises data about at least one product characteristic of the fiber optic assembly.

21. (Currently amended) A method of marking a ferrule of a fiber optic assembly, comprising:

establishing a predetermined pattern of a fiber optic indicia, wherein the fiber optic indicia is associated with information about the fiber optic assembly;

providing the ferrule for marking, the ferrule having an outer periphery and defining a rearward end, a forward end opposite the rearward end and a passageway extending between the rearward end and the forward end, the forward end defining an end face between the passageway and the outer periphery;

preparing ~~a predetermined portion of a surface~~ the end face of the ferrule for marking; ~~and~~

marking the ~~predetermined portion of the surface~~ end face in accordance with the predetermined pattern of the fiber optic indicia;

administering the fiber optic assembly in accordance with the fiber optic indicia;

and

using the fiber optic indicia to select at least a pair of ferrules that maximize the transfer of a transmitted communication signal in a ferrule connection.

22. (Canceled).

23. (Canceled).